

5.
CHRIST THE GREAT WANT OF THE SOUL.

A DISCOURSE

PREACHED BEFORE THE

AMERICAN AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY,

AT ITS

ANNUAL MEETING

HELD IN

THE TABERNACLE BAPTIST CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA,

MAY 13TH, 1858.

BY REV. HENRY C. FISH,


PASTOR OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH NEWARK, NEW JERSEY.

Published by request of the Society.

NEW YORK:

PRINTED BY EDWARD O. JENKINS,

No. 26 FRANKFORT STREET.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018 with funding from

This project is made possible by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services as administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education through the Office of Commonwealth Libraries

DISCOURSE.

“If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.”—John vii. 37.

SUBLIME beyond description were the scenes amid which these words were uttered. The last day of the Feast of the Tabernacles had come. It was a day of peculiar interest, of which the Jews were wont to say, that he who had not seen *that* day had seen no rejoicing. It is termed by the evangelist “that great day of the feast:” great, because of the solemn assembly and the closing ceremonies. For seven days, the people attending this feast in Jerusalem, had dwelt in their tabernacles, or arbors of shady branches and sweet-smelling flowers, in commemoration of the dwelling of their forefathers in tents, in passing through the wilderness. Now, however, on this the *eighth* day—the day of *holy convocation*—they were all assembled in the *Temple*. Every heart was beating with animation. Many there gathered had come from distant places. The good Lord had kept them in their journey up hither, and their feet once more had stood within the Holy City. Now they were about to retrace, with songs of deliverance and cheerful hope their beautiful country, drink in again the delicious air of this September month, and receive the greetings awaiting them on reaching their homes.

The final ceremonies were at hand. The special sacrifice, offered—not as those preceding, for the heathen as well as for the Jews—but for themselves only, had, as we may suppose, been presented. The reading of the law—which was commenced at the beginning of the feast—had been finished; and the singular ceremony, to which our Lord probably here refers, was already taking place.

That ceremony, though not of divine origin, and not obtaining till towards the end of the Hebrew Commonwealth, was in a high degree solemn and imposing; and was never performed, according

to the light which we have, except on this particular day. The ceremony consisted in libations of water, borne with great pomp in golden vessels from the pool of Siloam, and brought through the gate of the temple amidst the clangor of trumpets and all kinds of musical instruments. Introduced thus into the holy place, the people surrounded seven times the altar, with palm-branches in their hands and hosannas of praise, when the water was mixed with wine by some of the Levites, and poured out upon the altar and the victims, as emblematic of the Spirit's effusion and their wish to enjoy it; the people, in the mean time, singing those words of the old prophet: "With joy shall they draw water out of the wells of salvation."

It was probably just at the close of this rite, that our Saviour, perhaps stepping upon some eminence, stood up amid this vast concourse, and with an elevation of voice indicating the earnestness of his mind, proclaimed these gracious words: "IF ANY MAN THIRST, LET HIM COME UNTO ME AND DRINK." 'You have invented a rite in token of the coming Messiah, and your wish to enjoy the outpouring of his Spirit. In ME behold that Messiah. If you thirst for the blessings of his administration; if you ardently desire true happiness, and would refresh your souls from the wells of salvation, then come unto me, and drink. In ME is the fountain spring of true blessedness. Conscious of your need—longing for that which shall meet the demands of your natures—*come unto me*, and all those demands shall be met. The supplies of the Spirit which you profess to desire—yea, every needed good, I will freely impart. For he that believeth in me, as the scripture hath said, shall receive those blessings in such supplies, that he shall not only be himself refreshed, but, for the refreshment of others, from him shall flow forth, as it were, *rivers of living water*.'

My brethren, how glorious a truth is here brought to view. Let us proceed to its contemplation; and direct our attention more particularly, first, to the *doctrine* here presented, and afterwards to an *inference* from that doctrine.

I. And, first, THE DOCTRINE.

The doctrine is, that *Christ is the great want of the soul*: that man's true necessities are met in him, and in him alone.

What *are* man's moral necessities?—I mean, now, in his natural condition, and apart from all religious advantages.

Light is his first great necessity. Within him, and about him, all is dark. What am I? Whence am I? Whither do I go? Why do I exist? Am I self-created? Am I the work of chance? Is there any one above me? Is there some hidden power that made me—that made the worlds? What means this self-reproof; this dread of something, I know not what; this fear; this trembling of spirit; this struggle within; this longing for something substantial, and pure, and holy, and good?

Such are the questionings of that soul. It is a type of fallen humanity. Certainty as to the Divine Being; certainty as to man's destiny; certainty as to the way to be happy;—how anxiously has this been sought!

"What will become of me when I die?" said a thoughtful Hindoo, as he lay upon his death-couch. "O," said the Brahmin, who stood by, "you will inhabit another body." "And where," said he, "shall I go then?" "Into an other." "And where then?" "Into an other; and so on through thousands of millions of years." Darting across that whole period, he cried out, "*Where shall I go then?*"—And Paganism could not answer. The last, deep, agonizing cry was, "Where shall I go last of all?"—and with these words breaking from his lips, he plunged into the vast unknown. Says Dr. Mason, our missionary to the Karens: "The first earnest prayer I ever offered was—'Lord! I am in darkness: grant me light!'" If *he* might thus pray, how much more a *heathen*.

Without *light*, then, upon subjects so vast and so vital, the soul cannot be blessed.

A second great necessity of man is *Expiation*.

He is conscious of guilt. He would pacify the known or the unknown God, and purge himself from sin. Hence the struggles of an enlightened sinner. Hence the religious susceptibility of the unenlightened. "Whether true or false," says the historian Thiers, in his reflections upon the career of France—"whether true or false, sublime or ridiculous, man must have a religion. Everywhere, in all ages, in all countries, in ancient as in modern times, in civilized as in barbarian nations, we find him a worshipper at *some* altar, be it venerable, or degraded, or blood-stained."

One hundred and thirty-six thousand human skulls were counted in a particular temple in Mexico ; and it is estimated that for a period of two hundred years, there had been an average of some seven hundred murders, *annually*, in that country, in honor of a *single god*.

And with what aim, except to furnish an equivalent for conscious guilt? Every ancient form of rude religious service ; every costly temple reared among the habitations of cruelty ; every living body burned upon the funeral pile, or crushed beneath the wheels of the idol-car ; every ablution in sacred waters ; every maiden decking some idol shrine with sweet summer flowers ; every mother casting her darling child into the mouth of the crocodile, or into the fire, has for its *base* the idea of expiation. It is but the outward manifestation of a felt desire for propitiation and freedom from sin. It is but a blind groping after Christ, and the blood of the atonement.

With this need of light and expiation, there exists another felt necessity ; which is *Reunion with God*.

The soul is of heavenly origin ; and though sundered from God by sin, there is a conscious or unconscious longing for its primeval centre-point and resting-place. An amputated limb, it is said, seems to vibrate towards the part that is lost. The separated nerves appear to be in pain for their former connection. So the pulsations and throbbings of the soul are towards God, from whom it is now "far off by wicked works." The desire for *inward repose*, as we call it—peace, tranquility of spirit, rest—what is it but this instinctive "feeling after God?" And how apparent along the whole line of history. As SCHAFF has beautifully said, in his History of the Apostolic Church, "Through the dark labyrinth of mythological tales and traditions, we can trace the golden thread of a deep desire for reunion with God. The story of the prodigal son, who wandered away from his father's house, but retained, even in his lowest degradation, a painful remembrance of his native home—is a true picture of the heathen world." "All the scattered elements of truth, and beauty, and virtue," he continues, "in the religion, science, and art of ancient Greece and Rome, we must consider, with Tertullian, as the testimonies of a soul naturally Christian—a soul leaning in its deepest instincts, and noblest desires, towards Christianity, and predestined for it as the fulfilment of its wants and its hopes."

Man *was made for God*—designed to be his companion; and hence his heart is restless till it finds God. Disturbed by the presence of sin, yet, with tremulous motion, it sweeps to and fro,

“ True as the needle to the northern pole,”

nor rests till it comes into range with the great heart of the universe. As Augustine has it, “ Lord thou hast made man *for* thee, and our heart cannot rest till it come *to* thee.”

Now these are the three grand necessities of the soul :—Light, expiation, reunion with God. This perplexity, unrest, uneasiness, anxiety of men, everywhere seen, comes from the absence of these conditions. The search for them has been universal and incessant. I do not say that it has been *conscious* and *intelligent*; for man often knows not *what* he wants; and needs to be interpreted to himself: but under these heads you may classify all his felt necessities.

And behold, now, how *Christ meets* these great wants of humanity.

As “ the LIGHT of the world,” a “ Light to lighten the Gentiles,” he answers to the *first* necessity.

He finds a man busied with the problem of his own origin, and nature, and true end, and reveals himself *to* himself. He finds men of great and penetrating minds prying into the being and attributes of God, and ‘ *shows* unto them the Father.’ He finds them anxious as to the “ chief good,” and reveals HIMSELF as their chief good. He finds them shuddering on the verge of the tomb, and, like the Roman Emperor Hadrian, asking of the vital principle within, “ Poor, fluttering, lively spirit; poor guest and comrade of the body! to what unknown regions wilt thou wing thy way, pale, naked, trembling?” or, like the dying Hindoo, inquiring “ Where shall I go then?”—while the vast procession, swept on by an unseen power, is plunging into a midnight gulph,—and he dissipates impending night, and pours a flood of light upon the grave and the dread hereafter.

How changed the scene! No more are heard the plaintive notes of ancient days:

“ Alas ! the meanest flowers which gardens yield—
 The vilest weeds that flourish in the field,
 Which dead in wintry sepulchres appear,
 Revive in spring, and bloom another year :
 But we, the great, the brave, the learned, the wise,
 Soon as the hand of death has closed our eyes,
 In tombs forgotten lie : no suns restore,
 We sleep, forever sleep, to wake no more :”

or, as sings another of the heathen poets,

“ The sun that sinks into the main,
 Sets with fresh light to rise again :
 But we, when once our breath is fled,
 Die, and are numbered with the dead ;
 With endless night we close our day,
 And sleep eternity away :”

O, no ! Rather do I behold, instead, a dying believer—type of a great multitude—nearing the tomb with the shout of assurance breaking from his lips, ‘I know whom I have believed ; and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day ! I am safe in the hands of Jesus ! He is the Resurrection and the Life ! Lay me in the grave ! That is not the end of me ! The *casket* rusts out and falls to pieces, but the gem that filled it sparkles yet ! And even *that* is not lost, for God shall watch o’er my sleeping dust, till he shall bid it rise !’

Nor here, alone, but in all directions does Christ shed light ; for in him are “ hid all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge.” Thus does he meet man’s first necessity.

And what of the *second*—expiation, atonement, removal of sin ? To the myriads in lands remote, who vainly seek to gain this end by bleeding victims, and self-laceration, and toilsome pilgrimage, he—the Lamb of God—presents, instead, the one sacrifice of himself on the cross. And to the convicted sinner, in Christian lands, who cries out, as did Luther, “ My sin, my sin ; O, what can take away my sin !”—whose conscience peals its accusations through all the chambers of the soul ; before whom Omnipotence has unsheathed his sword, and the pit seems ready to devour ; who prays, and yearns, and thirsts for pardon, and asks imploringly, “ Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before

the high God?"—*to such* an one, O how suited is Christ! He alone can help a man in this sad extremity! He alone can say, "Look unto me and live!—thirsting, famishing, dying sinner, come unto me and drink!" Thank God, he can say it. He *does* say it. God hath exalted him, to give repentance and remission of sins. His blood, O his blood—it has power to cleanse away the deepest stain. It cleanseth from all sin. It speaketh better things than that of Abel. It cries not for vengeance, but for mercy and forgiveness. It brings peace, and comfort, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

You have felt it, beloved in the Lord. Kayarnack, Greenland's first convert, felt it; when, hearing the missionary read of JESUS, he demanded, "Read that again! Read that again! I, too, would be saved!" The dying Lutheran, by whose side I once stood telling of justification without works, and the "fountain filled with blood," felt it, as he eagerly exclaimed, "That's good! That's good! That makes me feel better now!" O, how many thousands have felt it this blessed winter past!

Thus completely does Christ meet this second great necessity—provision for sin and conscious guilt.

Nor less complete is his adaptedness to supply that *other* want of our nature—that ineffable yearning of the heart after some unrealized good; that listening of the up-turned ear to catch the 'feeble cadences of some half-remembered celestial harmony;' that reaching out of our unblest being after *something* upon which it may lean, and steady, and rest itself—all of which is, as before shown, but the drawing of the soul towards the infinite Centre of blessedness, or its unconscious effort to find out and reëstablish the broken connection between itself and its Parent on high.

Has not Christ effected this reunion? Is he not the Restorer of fallen humanity? And *as such* was he not the "*Desire of all nations*"—the object looked for and longed for; the centre, alike of the world's history and of the yearnings of the individual heart? In him—the God-man—the divine and the human were strangely conjoined. He was GOD, and at the same time MAN. O wondrous union! He stepped in, as our Day's-Man, and laid his hands upon us both—the offender and the offended. He spanned the yawning chasm opened by the shock of the Fall, and put us once more, through himself, into communication with our Maker and God.

And for what lives he now, but to perfect this reunion in individual experience?—but to take, as it were, in his own hands, the bleeding ligaments of our poor dissevered hearts, and attach them to the great heart of the Eternal? And, Oh, when by faith this sun-dered tie is thus reunited, as the branch to the vine, then how vitality and health do pour through all the delighted sensibilities! How the agitations of the soul die away! How heart beats responsive to heart! How the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, comes to be enjoyed! ‘I just begin to live,’ cries the astonished and delighted individual! ‘I have found what I was ignorantly seeking after! I have found that *real good*, of which I had a faint and confused notion! I have found CHRIST; and in him have I found light, and reconciliation, and repose! I need—no, I need *nothing besides!*

“Thou, O Christ, art all I want;
All in all in thee I find!”

CHRIST, then, my brethren, (to conclude this part of our discourse,) is what man needs. He may not know it. He does not, oftentimes, know it. But the yearnings of his nature are in this direction. Unblest *is* he—unblest *must* he be without Christ. “CHRIST!” “CHRIST!” “WE WANT CHRIST!”—*this* is the interpretation of the world’s sigh and the world’s search in all generations. It is the ‘wail of the ages gone by; the everreappearing refrain of poetry; the under-beat of the deepest philosophy; the still, sad music of humanity.’

You have already anticipated the remaining division of our subject; namely,

II. THE INFERENCE from the doctrine now established.

That inference is, *The world’s need of the Gospel of Christ.*

If men need Christ, their need of his gospel is *essential*. Christ never goes before his gospel. He is put into communication with men, and becomes theirs only through the medium of his word. Of course, before he is known and possessed, he must *reveal* himself; and this he has determined to do, *not* by a personal manifestation of himself, nor by means of angelic agency; but *in his own word as dispensed by men*. The Spirit never renews the heart, and “forms

Christ within, the hope of glory," except through the instrumentality of *the truth*. It might have been otherwise: but so God has ordained. If Christ, as "*the light of the world*," comes to dissipate man's darkness, and bring to his mind the knowledge of things heavenly and divine, he sheds forth that light, since his ascension, not independently of, but *solely through* the inspired word. As there was one atonement, so also was there *one revelation*. As he died once, so spake he once. As he saves no more except through that *one offering* of himself, so neither does he utter any more those great, essential truths, except through this *one revelation*.

In like manner, if Christ, as the "*propitiation for our sins*," has rendered possible the purification and salvation of fallen humanity, we have no reason to believe that his blood ever has, or ever will, in a solitary instance, cleanse away actual transgression independently of, and wholly separated from, this glorious gospel of his grace. He does not go before his word, or aside from his word, in the work of pardon and sanctification. So also, if Christ, as the *Restorer of the lost*, in bringing the wanderer to himself, brings him to that infinite centre of true rest to which he feels mysteriously related, he reclaims no wanderer, he reunites no sundered tie, except as he operates by means of the gospel—the appointed power of God unto salvation.

Unless *the word*, therefore, reach a man, there comes no saving knowledge, no expiation, no union with the Father—in fine, *no salvation*.

Such is the uniform representation of the Scriptures. Except through *Christ*, there is no deliverance; "for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." And without *faith* in him, *no one is saved by him*: for "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one *that believeth*." But faith cannot be exercised in him without the *knowledge* of him: for "how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" Hence the heathen are represented as lost: "They that sin without the law (the written word) perish without the law." True, they suffer not as those who reject Christ; and yet, though they perish *without the law*, they nevertheless "*perish*;" they are *not saved*.

To deny men the BIBLE, then, is to leave them still enveloped in darkness, to turn on every side

“ Eyes that roll in vain
To find the piercing ray, and find no dawn.”

To deny them the Bible, is to deny them—shall I say it?—to deny them cleansing in the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, and leave them to the stings of conscious guilt, the terrors of remorse, and the forebodings of coming woe! To deny them the Bible, is to deny them happiness in life; the rod of the Shepherd in the valley of death; approval in the day of doom, and inheritance among the saints in light.—What do I say? To deny them the Bible, is to deny them *Christ!*—to deny them the *power of God to save!*—to deny them HEAVEN!

Who, then, that has a heart—who would—who *could* deny men the Bible? To refuse to any part of our race the knowledge of the arts, and the discoveries of science, and the treasures of philosophy, much more to monopolize (were it in our power) the free air of heaven, and the sweet waters, and the luxurious fruits of the earth—*this*, when remembered, were enough to mantle our cheeks with shame and guilt. But what were this compared with denying men *God's holy word?*

And yet, are we not open to this charge? It is now more than nineteen hundred years, since Cicero, in the Tusculan Questions, with earnestness inquired, “ why it was, that since so much care had been shown to heal the body, a like care had not been shown to discover some remedy for the soul?” He declares that he has made this great discovery; and propounds this as the true doctrine; that “ Philosophy is the medicine for the soul.” Ah! how he missed the mark. And *to-day*, with the most painful interest, are the nations asking, and asking in vain, *What is the medicine for the SOUL?*” We know, for God has told us, and we have proven it true, that CHRIST is the healing for the soul. But we have not told them. We have kept the knowledge to ourselves; and that, too, when it was enjoined by everything that was sacred, that we communicate this great secret, with the utmost haste, to *every one* of our fellows. Still have we kept the secret, comparatively, to ourselves! And now it is said, that with their present income, it will take all the Bible Societies in the world *six hundred years* to give every heathen a copy of the Bible! Can it be? Great God! *shall* it be, that *six hundred years more* shall pass away before all thy creatures shall know of this medicine for the soul?

My brethren, by what terms shall we designate this our apathy in meeting the world's need of the blessed gospel?

Shall I call it *uncompassionate and inhuman*? Is it anything less, to leave our fellow-creatures to "sigh and strive in the dark and stifling bondage of heathenism," when it is in our power to bring them relief? I have read of a mastiff, whose broken leg a physician had bound up, re-appearing and whining at the office-door, one day, and, upon the door being opened, laying at the feet of the physician a little sufferer of his species, which he had found pining from a calamity like his own. And Audubon tells us that upon once shooting a bird of peculiar plumage, all his fellows flew to his relief, and as they saw the azure drops staining the feathers, sprang towards the carcass, then bounded impetuously back, uttered unwonted shrieks, and screamed aloud as if for help, until, after every vain exertion to rouse the slumberer, they silently hied to their sequestered retreat. How humiliating that men—aye, that *Christians* should show less of sympathy for their race, than is shown among the brutes! And yet to this matter of fellow-feeling, might we not apply the words of Job: "Ask the beasts now, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee?"

Shall I style this apathy as *contemptuous towards the character and work of Christ*? It is not virtually saying, 'It is of little moment that an atonement has been made. It is well enough; but what matters it that we should be so anxious to make the fact known?' O, how does CHRIST, who shed his *precious blood* to redeem fallen man,—how does HE look upon this indifference?

I ask again, if it is not *disloyal and disrespectful towards God*, our great King?

When the ancient Scottish chief would assemble his clan by means of the Fiery Cross, in the hands of swift messengers, the man to whom the symbol was presented, in any particular hamlet, considered himself bound under the most fearful anathemas, to send it forward, and with the accompanying watchword, with the *same despatch* to the next village; so that *all* the inhabitants might receive word. His acknowledged loyalty, if not his life, depended upon it. And when the President of these States delivers his message, while it is even yet being read, the whole wiry web-work of the land is vibrating with its syllables, and thousands

of ready hands are waiting to seize it and cast it into type, and tens of thousands to catch it smoking from the press, and scatter it to the utmost borders. 'Tis but *respectful*. "The king's business requires haste." And the lightning, even, is too slow in telling what this high official has to communicate.

Painful contrast! This word of JEHOVAH, deserves IT no regard? This message from the Sovereign of the universe, upon matters vast as eternity, shall we refuse to send it forward, and let it lie upon our hands as if hardly worth reporting? Say, is it not something *more* than disrespectful to him that sent it, and with the special charge, 'Communicate it to every creature?'

There is no *excuse* for this neglect in the diffusion of divine truth. Surely there is no lack of *means*. Neither is there of *facilities*: for here is an organization, projected for this very purpose; a society worthy of all confidence; one which is known throughout the world; and which has direct communication with every part of the globe; and which stands, to night, proffering and pledging itself, with the far-reaching arms of its influence, if only supplied with funds, to place, without delay, in the hands of *every creature* a copy of the word of God.

Shall this apathy, therefore, continue?

Let the *glory of God* stimulate us to action: for, as some one has remarked, every moment during which we continue to withhold from men the gospel, we are withholding from God his highest glory—we are concealing from them a scheme of mercy from which he is expecting to derive his richest revenue of praise forever.

Let the "*open door*" incite us: for *to what one people* are we forbidden to carry this gospel?

Let *gratitude* impel us: for, is not the gift of this word to others, the *least* return we can make for its free gift to us?

Let *pity* urge us. The great Irish pulpit orator, Kirwan, in a charity sermon for orphan children, would encircle his hearers with his little clients; would bring them into their presence; let them hang upon their garments, and entwine their fatherless arms about their knees; and pour from their untainted lips, the cry, "*Mercy, for we perish!*" So have I sometimes thought, that could we bring before our congregations a sight of the

millions of poor heathens; could we encircle them with that mighty concourse gathered from lands remote; could they come with their dark minds, their anxious, aching hearts, and their scarred and bleeding bodies—the hooks, and knives, and nails of their self-torture, still piercing and cankering in their flesh,—and, standing with their uplifted arms, imploringly cry, “Send us the good-news-man! Send us the Balm of Gilead! Send us the Bread of Life! Mercy! mercy! we perish! Send us, O send us CHRIST!”—would not *that* touch us, and lead us to run on rapid feet with the life-giving word?

Let *our estimate of the Scriptures* move us. One of the most remarkable preachers of his day—Mr. Rogers of Dedham—once melted down his congregation, by personating God as chiding them for their neglect of the Bible, and finally coming down and taking it from them altogether. And as they beheld this treasure being borne away from them, he made them, cry out, “Lord, whatsoever else thou takest from us, take not away thy Bible Kill our children, burn our houses, destroy our goods only spare us thy Bible, only take not from us thy Bible!” The house was a Bochim—a place of tears; and the clergyman who was present, and narrates the circumstance, was so affected, with all the people, at the thought of losing the Bible, that on leaving the house, he hung weeping a quarter of an hour upon his horse’s neck, unable to mount.

Ah! what would WE accept, as an equivalent for the BIBLE? What were *our* feelings, if the *last copy* were about to be taken away from us, *forever*?

But while drawing and drinking with joy, every day, from this refreshing fountain, shall we forget the millions of our race who have never tasted so much as *one drop* of those sweet waters?—who have not so much as *one leaf* of this sacred volume? Oh! would it not be *sweet to them*? Was it not a converted Choctaw, who, upon hearing read for the first time, in his own language, a few verses from the 5th chapter of 2d Corinthians, could not restrain his delight, but cried out, interrupting the reading, “*It is so SWEET to me!*” Shall not, I say, the worth of this Book *to us*, impel us to give it to *others*?

And, finally, let *our estimate of CHRIST* prompt us. What were *life*, to us, without *Christ*? And how could we *die* without

Christ? "You must go with me, father," said a dying child, a little while since; "you must go with me into the grave; it's dark! I can't go alone?" And being told that this could not be so, she turned to the wall and prayed; and soon afterwards said, "Pa, I don't want you to go with me into the grave now. I am not afraid to go without you. I asked *Christ* to go with me, and he said he would; and I am not afraid to go into the grave now!"—And who of *us*, could go without Christ, *alone*, into the dark grave? And then, beloved, as to that "better land," where we hope, ere long, to dwell—what of it? What were HEAVEN without Christ? What *is* heaven?—*where* is heaven? "Heaven," says Chrysostom, "*is where Christ is.*" Could he have answered more wisely? When we have done serving, and are going home, it will not be the streets of gold, and the gates of pearl, and the lovely scenes on heavenly fields unrolled, that will detain us: no, no, no! *we shall ask after CHRIST!*

" My disembodied soul,
Ye kindred angels, *take to JESUS' breast!*
There, dove-like, seeks my heart its final goal;
There, only, longs to rest!"

Precious, *precious* JESUS! how could we live without THEE? How could we *die* without thee? And were we in heaven without THEE, it were *no heaven* to us!

But forget not, beloved, that OTHERS are living without Christ! aye, *dying*, and *going into the next world without him!* And I have been pleading for them, to-night, since they are not here to plead for themselves. And I do now beseech of you, by your love for that blessed Saviour, in addition to the other considerations named, that you regard their cause; and, by giving to them the BIBLE, give to them CHRIST—the one, great, central, imperative, *essential* want of the soul!

And may God grant, that no one here present may live without Christ; and die without Christ: and, in the after-life, having no Christ to satisfy the cravings of his soul, *live but to thirst*, and *thirst on*, FOREVER: never, *never more* hearing, as now, these gracious words: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink!"